Chicago is her present, future

After graduation, lead actress plans to move and continue acting.

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Scene Reporter

Theater and camera acting are two different types of professions for actors.

Although many actors and actresses are able to do both, they all have to start somewhere, and most start on the stage.

Ask Anna Kurtz, Arts & Sciences senior, the lead in Creighton's spring play "Chicago."

Kurtz will graduate this spring with her Bachelor's of Fine Arts in theater performance.

She said she plans to make a move to Chicago to start her acting career with auditions and performances. Her lead role in "Chicago" as Roxie was a start to a new future for the actress.

During the fall 2006 semester, there were auditions for the show in the Lied Education Center for the Arts. All actors had to prepare a monologue, sing and dance for the audition.

"We auditioned way back in November, and we had to have a monologue and 16 bars of a song," Kurtz said. "I wanted to have a song that was belly, and then a monologue that contrasted the musical comedy."

In both the monologue and the song, the actors who auditioned needed to show their singing and acting abilities. The dancing was a challenge for some.

Since the audition process was private between the actor and the judges, there was no opportunity to watch others who were auditioning. While others waited their turn, the feeling of butterflies got the best of some of them.

"I definitely didn't think I had the part. My biggest issue was dancing, and I get really nervous. I didn't do too well the first night with auditioning," Kurtz said. "I didn't know who was trying out because we didn't get to sit in there and watch everyone else audition, so I only knew how I had done."

Although she said she was nervous, Kurtz was cast as Roxie Hart.

With that part came many struggles. Kurtz had to prepare for the role over winter break, as well as mentally get to know the character.

"It was a totally different experience because of the long process of auditioning in November and rehearsals starting when we came back from Christmas break," Kurtz said.

"Tammy Meneghini was the director of 'Chicago,' and she was just finding the characters and reading the scenes with character profiling."

While rehearsals went on, Kurtz had the opportunity to find the type of confidence and dancing ability her character needed.

Through all the personal struggles she went through as Roxie, Kurtz was still able to find inspiration in how Roxie progressed and how other cast members boosted her confidence.

"With cast members, I really love the theater boys. They are my chorus boys. They are so adorable, and they make me want to perform better," she said.

Starring with Kurtz is David Catherall, who plays lawyer Billy Flynn.

As a castmate, he noticed that Anna set an example to the entire cast. Catherall said that Kurtz brought a certain level of maturity to the stage.

"I love working with Anna. She is very professional and always on the ball," Catherall said. "She takes a lot of time to thoroughly prepare so she never wastes your time."

Playing Roxie in "Chicago" has been Kurtz's biggest role in theater, but she has done many other plays here on Creighton's campus. She performed in "Louis and Clark," "A Flea in Her Ear" and "American Dream," among others.

Kurtz also has worked professionally at the Northwestern Nebraska Post Playhouse with some acting parts through a summer internship. After graduation, Kurtz said she plans to build her acting portfolio in the city of Chicago. Although she has auditioned for many acting companies, she said she isn't too sure where she will focus her career.

"I have a job for the part in the Nebraska Shakespeare festival, I'm not really sure," Kurtz said. "I auditioned for United Professional Theater in Tennessee. I did really well and got 20 call backs but it didn't work out. I'm not too worried about it; I think I may just move to Chicago."

Her family has been very supportive throughout her education and most recent about her decision to move to Illinois, she said.

When she was a little girl, Kurtz said she became passionate about musicals because her grandmother introduced them to her.

By moving, Kurtz said she will be forced to step out of her comfort zone.

"It's going to be hard. I can't even imagine because Creighton has been so comfortable. I've had a place to stay and food to eat, living by myself, I don't know what's going to happen," Kurtz said.

Kurtz said she isn't sure what may come her future, but she's not going to give up.

"When you're auditioning and getting rejected all the time, you really have to believe that you're good," Kurtz said. "I try once at I'm not giving up. You got to keep trying, didn't get every part I auditioned for, but it was worth it. And if it doesn't, try again."